

REMARKS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-3 and 5-22 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-3 and 5-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over King et al. (5,319,542) in view of Cohn et al. (PG Pub. 2002-0010651) and Doss (US Patent No. 6,415,263).

According to the foregoing, the claims are amended, and, thus, the pending claims remain for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested. No new matter has been added.

In the present invention, a discount price is provided for a customer who accesses a shopping site using a dedicated URL (i.e., the claimed “first network address for a constituent member of a particular group” and “a second network address for a customer who is not a member of the particular group.” Thus, when the shopping site is accessed by a customer using the dedicated URL, the customer is checked whether he or she is really a constituent member of a particular group. Corresponding embodiment is shown, for example, in Fig. 3. In the embodiment, the certification subsystem 31 certifies the user who accesses the site with the dedicated URL using the employee database 20.

A prima facie case of obviousness based upon King, Cohn and Doss cannot be established, because there is no evidence that one skilled in the art would combine King's public and private catalogues, with Cohn's centralized database for sharing data collected from participating Web sites (paragraph 50), and with Doss's item pricing information system and modify King, Cohn and/or Doss to provide the claimed “first network address for a constituent member of a particular group” and “a second network address for a customer who is not a member of the particular group,” and “judging whether certification is to be performed based on the network address of the shopping site accessed by the customer; certifying the customer by referring to a database storing constituent member information of the particular group, when the customer is judged to be a constituent member of the particular group.”

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejection of pending claims and allowance of pending claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,
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